

Charity Registration No. 1188312

SILVER STORIES

**ANNUAL REPORT AND UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 1st APRIL 2025**

SILVER STORIES

Legal and Administrative Information

Charity Name: Silver Stories

Charity Number: 1188312

Principal address: Westbourne House
Westbourne Terrace
Torpoint
Cornwall
PL12 2BX

Governing document: CIO Foundation - Registered 03 March 2020

Legal Form: Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)

Trustees Dr Emma Corrigan - Resigned 1st May 2025
Elisabeth Carney Haworth OBE
David Carney Haworth OBE
Lydia Baggaley - Resigned 28/10/2024
Rachel Ewan-Corrigan
Gary Rycroft - Resigned 25/07/2024
Dame Esther Rantzen
Richard Marsh
Duane Seymore - Appointed 15th April 2025
Janet Tyler - Appointed 15th April 2025

Independent examiner: ATC Advisors
Chartered Accountants
Unit 2 Dunheved Court
Pennygillam Way
Launceston
Cornwall
PL15 7ED



HM Queen, Patron

Westbourne House,
Westbound Terrace. Saltash Cornwall.
PL12 2BX

Registered Charity No 1188312

April 2024 – March 2025

5th Year of Operation

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

Charity Summary

It is worth celebrating that Silver Stories has now completed its fifth year as a charity, a year that has seen many positive moves forward with the incredibly meaningful activity that is Silver Stories.

We should remind ourselves of the foundational mission of Silver Stories. It was one of the creator's decades of experience (Elisabeth Carney-Haworth OBE) with young children aged 2-11 that enabled her to clearly identify that many children did not enjoy reading. She describes reading for these children as so often something that was 'taught' at school with either the teacher or the TA engaging in one to one, group or class activities based upon developing the skills to be a reader. 'Practising' these skills was a daily activity that parents were asked to undertake with their children, an activity for too many children which was frequently rushed and given little importance within busy households with competing calls upon the time of parents/carers.

During her 42 years of teaching, she, and headteachers and teachers across the country, had tried many different ways to assist children to experience the joy of reading, allowing children to explore many and varied ways to access reading as a beautiful and rewarding activity.

Events such as World Book Day, which can be transformational in schools, has, for so many, become no more than a headache for parent/carers as they try to create or buy clothes for a child to dress up in as they go into school.

And then the idea of Silver Stories was created, initially that kernel of the scheme was conceived by David Carney-Haworth OBE (the joint creator of Silver Stories) and then developed and shaped by both Elisabeth and David Carney-Haworth, with each of them bringing other aspects of their experience to the discussion:

- The numbers of older members of our community who are alone and lonely
- The lack of relationships with any generation above that of their parents for many children
- The lack of relationships with grandparents for many children
- The lack of the ability to read to someone in an unjudgmental way that enables the child to enjoy the reading, the story, the magic of sharing reading with another person who is keen to listen to you
- The importance of reading aloud
- The importance of conversation and communication
- The importance of thinking of others and bringing joy to others

Silver Stories is built upon the beauty of intergenerational relationships, the passion of its creators to enable children to experience reading as a truly inspirational activity and the drive to end the often isolated and lonely experience of many of the older generation within our country and beyond.

The feedback received by the charity from all those involved: Silver Readers, Silver Reader's parents, Silver Stories schools, Silver Listeners and Partners such as Social Prescribers, all consolidate that this activity, so simple and so efficient, continues to be lifechanging and enriching for all those involved, including the Trustees and our part time Coordinator.

The creators have described Silver Stories as a 'warm hug' and this description is no less appropriate as we move towards our sixth year and receiving the positive comments from participants is never anything but both moving and rewarding and confirmation that is an apt description of Silver Stories.

The beginning of 2025 has seen a resurgence of the dialogue about our children's reading.

In January 2025, the current Children's Laureate, Frank Cottrell-Boyce, announced that he was to lead a campaign to tackle a "recession in children's happiness", a recession that he believes is caused by a decline in reading at a young age.

He believes that whilst our children may look successful as readers in terms of our league tables for reading, reading for pleasure is in decline, leading to "less chance of [them] being happy".

The creators of Silver Stories argue that the league tables for reading have no connection or relevance to children's reading for pleasure or their desire to be or continue to be engaged in reading for its own merit as they move through childhood and into adulthood.

At the Reading Rights Summit (January 2025) there was a call to ensure that the 'life-changing benefits of children's reading are taken seriously.'

Diana Gerald MBE and CEO of the BookTrust (co-host of the summit) remarked:

"There has never been a more urgent time for us to inspire a new generation of children on their reading journeys."

Silver Stories is a beautiful example of how children can be supported to develop fluency, comprehension skills and most of all a true love of reading. The feedback from our schools and parents of children who read from home reinforce that Silver Stories makes this difference for our participating children.

AgeUK report the need to "focus on creating supportive communities and social networks to help address loneliness." This is exactly the space where Silver Stories exists and, as you read this report you will feel that appreciation of the connection and joy that Silver Readers bring to their Silver Listeners.

It is worth noting that for many of our Silver Listeners 2024 was not an easy year and things have not improved in 2025. As we move towards spring, their spirits begin to rise as they feel the coldness, the dark of winter are particularly difficult for many of them

~

Chair of Trustees Comments:

It has been an honour to serve as Chair of Trustees for the last 5 years and to be part of this wonderful charity that supports older and younger people developing meaningful relationships through the joy of reading. There have been countless examples of the very powerful impact for all parties involved and the Trustees have had the unbending commitment of the Silver Stories Co-Founders, David and Elisabeth Carney-Haworth, at the helm. I would like to offer my sincere thanks to all Trustees and supporters of this wonderful charity.

~

Charity Update:

We are aware that the number of participants fluctuates over time:

Some Silver Listeners become too ill to participate, move into Care Homes that feel they cannot facilitate Silver Stories, or very sadly die.

Silver Readers grow up and their focus changes, sometimes feeling that the pressure of exams means that they cannot continue.

But all leave the Charity having had the most wonderful experience.

Silver Stories Coordinator

One of the main activities that has been undertaken is the appointment of our own Silver Stories Coordinator.

Badges

We continue to send out some badges to our Silver Readers. They have been very well received.

Duke of Edinburgh Award

We also continue to support a number of Silver Readers who are undertaking Silver Stories as part of their Duke of Edinburgh award.

Sadly, whilst the vast majority of our Silver Stories Schools are thoroughly enjoying participation in the scheme, value the positive impact for individual children and across the whole school community and are efficient in their organisation of how Silver Stories is put into place, we have a small number of schools who have struggled to continue to find the staff or time to remain part of Silver Stories. This is a clear reflection of all that we hear in the press about the burdens upon our schools, not least the financial burdens which have negatively impacted upon staffing levels. We support schools to remain part of Silver Stories in every way possible.

Partners

The range of 'partners' who refer Silver Listeners to the charity is growing and there is a particular rise in the number of Social Prescribers who are recognising the benefit of referring their clients to the charity.

The most important part of Silver Stories is to share the wonderful feedback that is received from every part of the charity. These quotations (the smallest of selection from hundreds of comments) reflect the enormous difference that Silver Stories creates.

Befriending Coordin: "I think it's an amazing charity and the work that you do is truly inspiring. Some service users prefer not to have someone visit their home and this is a fantastic way to help them feel less isolated and lonely. It gives them something to look forward to whilst also benefiting the children involved. Many service users love audio books and this offers a similar experience but with the added warmth of a real person on the other end of the phone. One lady who has Silver Stories shared with me that listening to a Silver Stories child truly brightens her day and makes a big difference in her life and she looks forward to it."

Mother of Silver Reader said that Silver Listener and Silver Reader have a 'beautiful relationship' and that the Silver Reader takes great pride in talking to her Silver Listener and even calls her when she is on holiday.

Two long serving Silver Readers spoke about how proud they are to be part of Silver Stories, how much joy they gain from it and how it has helped especially the older male reader to improve his reading skills.

Daughter of Silver Listener (who has dementia) said what a wonderful thing Silver Stories is in helping relieve loneliness for her mother.

Daughter of Silver Listener "Could I say what an amazing concept Silver Stories is. I wish this had been around when our son was learning to read. He was an incredibly reluctant reader and I know he would have benefitted from this and secondly it is brilliant for the elderly and lonely (like my mother). Thank you enormously for putting her in touch with her Silver Reader.'

Silver Listener said that his Silver Reader has made such a difference to his life. He was feeling very low and since she has been reading to him it has lifted his spirits. We forwarded this onto the Silver Reader's mother who was very pleased to hear this and passed it on to her daughter.

School reported: 'Our Silver Readers have built up fantastic bonds with their Silver Listeners and they really look forward to their weekly sessions.'

School said "The bond the Silver Readers and Silver Listeners have is amazing and both parties benefit enormously from this Service.'

The Silver Stories Lead in a school sent the following message:

"Since we joined 3 years ago Silver Stories has brought our school nothing but joy and an immense sense of pride to our pupils in the difference they are making to someone's life. The opportunity it has provided our pupils to speak to and read to older members of society has helped to create positive intergenerational relationships that have greatly benefitted everyone involved. Through their weekly conversations our pupils (Silver Readers) have built up a lovely rapport with their Silver Listeners. Not only have they improved their reading fluency, but also their confidence and self-esteem. In addition, the children also enjoy their weekly chats before reading in which their Silver Listener has entertained them with anecdotes of what life was like when they were children and their shared hobbies. In turn our children have brought them companionship and happiness, sometimes during difficult times. As one Silver Listener put it, they are their 'little ray of sunshine each week'. A lovely sentiment shared by everyone involved.'

Grandmother of a family of three Silver Readers who all read to the same Silver Listener:

'It is so lovely for the children, two with ADHD and all three with dyslexia, to do something altruistic and to see how much they enjoy the reading to their Silver Listener. It really is remarkable and thank you for creating such a beautiful scheme'

'Once you learn to read you will be forever free'

Frederick Douglass

Silver Stories continues to adhere faithfully to the Objects of the Charity.

The Objects of the CIO are:

1) To advance education for the public benefit among children, in particular through the provision of supervised opportunities to read aloud to listeners as a means of improving reading/literacy and communication skills and building self-confidence.

Silver Stories will enable children (Silver Readers) whether in schools or other establishments, to telephone older people (Silver Listeners) who have volunteered to be part of the scheme, in order to read aloud to them;

2) For the public benefit to relieve the needs of elderly people, in particular by offering them volunteering opportunities to act as listeners for children who will read aloud to them by telephone with the aims of reducing feelings of loneliness and social isolation and maintaining inter-generational contact.

Research has shown that this type of activity will increase confidence and reading skills in the children, and enable the older people, who may be isolated and alone, to remain in contact with children thus improving their mental and physical wellbeing;

3) To provide relief from stress and suffering for older people experiencing loneliness and isolation and to develop reading and communication skills for children;

4) To liaise with education establishments, older people and their representatives and other agencies;

5) Seeking to form partnerships with other charities and organisations which deliver mutual and complimentary benefits;

6) Providing support and information and where necessary advocacy, guidance and mentoring to older persons and education establishments teaching staff;

All trustees have been advised to read the Charitable Business Law Guidance issued by the Charity Commission (CC) taking especial notice of the seven guiding principles. In addition, the CEO/Treasurer/Chair provides regular updates to all Trustees on CC policy and lessons from enquiries etc.

Additional Information:

Policy on grant making:

The Charity is not in a position to make grants at this time.

Policy on social investment including program related investment:

Despite the Charities very purpose being a 'social investment' this investment is not directly fiscal.

The Charity does not have a body of volunteers other than the Trustees.

Achievements and Performance:

To date Silver Stories has Silver Readers and Silver Listeners, schools and Partners from across the country and beyond. This equates to hundreds of hours of reading and listening each week.

Structure, Governance and Management

Type of governing document:

Constitution Document

How is the charity constituted?

Charitable Incorporated Organisation (Foundation Structure) - whose only voting members are its trustees

Trustee selection methods including details of any constitutional provisions:

New Trustees may be recruited to the Board at any time by the Trustees. In selecting individuals for appointment as Trustees, the Trustees must have regard to the skills, knowledge and experience needed for the effective administration of the charity.

Policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees:


Each new Trustee must receive, on or before his or her first appointment a copy of the current version of the constitution and a copy of the CIO's latest Trustees' annual report and statement of accounts. The new Trustee will also be briefed individually by the CEO or Chair of Trustees.

The charity's organisational structure and any wider network with which the charity works:

Reference and Administrative details:	
Charity name	Silver Stories
Registered charity number	1188312
Charity's principal address	Westbourne House. Westbourne Terrace Torpoint Cornwall PL12 2BX

Name of trustees who manage the charity:			
Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (If any)
Dr Emma Corrigan	Chair of Trustees		NA
Elisabeth Carney-Haworth OBE	Co-founder, Pro bono CEO and Clerk		NA
David Carney-Haworth OBE	Co-founder, Safeguarding		NA
Rachel Ewan-Corrigan	Research		
Dame Esther Rantzen			NA
Richard Marsh	Treasurer		NA
Duane Seymore		15 th April 2025	NA
Janet Tyler		15 th April 2025	NA

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees.

 —. D. P. SEYMORE 030625.

D Seymore

June 2025

SILVER STORIES

Independent Examiners Report on the Unaudited Financial Statements of Silver Stories for the Year Ended 1st April 2025

I report on the financial statements of the CIO for the year ended 1st April 2025, which are set out on pages 5 to 8.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this period under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- (i) examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- (ii) to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- (iii) to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

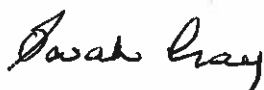
Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the next statement.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no other matter has come to my attention:

- (a) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:
 - (i) to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
 - (ii) to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records, and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act;have not been met or
- (b) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Sarah Gay FCA/FCCA

ATC Advisors
Chartered Accountants
Unit 2 Dunheved Court
Pennygillam Way
Launceston
Cornwall
PL15 7ED

Dated: 13th June 2025

SILVER STORIES

Statement of Financial Activities (Incorporating the Income and Expenditure account) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 1st APRIL 2025

	Notes	Unrestricted Fund £	Restricted Fund £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
<u>Income from:</u>					
Grants and donations	2	750	-	750	54,253
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES		750	-	750	54,253
<u>Expenditure on:</u>					
Charitable activities	3	6,067	601	6,668	6,766
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED		6,067	601	6,668	6,766
Net movement in funds		(5,317)	(601)	(5,918)	47,487
Total Funds Brought Forward	6	67,778	1,668	69,446	21,959
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	6	62,461	1,067	63,528	69,446

SILVER STORIES

Balance Sheet as at 1st April 2025

		2025	2024
		£	£
Notes			
Current Assets			
Cash at bank		<u>63,528</u>	<u>69,446</u>
		63,528	69,446
Net Current Assets		63,528	69,446
Total assets less current liabilities		<u>63,528</u>	<u>69,446</u>
Net assets		<u>63,528</u>	<u>69,446</u>
Income funds			
Restricted funds	6	1,067	1,668
Unrestricted funds	6	<u>62,461</u>	<u>67,778</u>
TOTAL FUNDS		<u>63,528</u>	<u>69,446</u>

The financial statements were approved by order of the board of trustees on 03.06.25 and are signed on its behalf by:

 D. P. SEYMORE

D Seymore

SILVER STORIES

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 1st April 2025

1 Accounting convention

The financial statements of the charity, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Charities Act 2011. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention on a receipts and payments basis.

The accounts are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

1.1 Going concern

At the time of approving the accounts, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future.

1.2 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives unless the funds have been designated for other purposes.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the accounts as appropriate.

1.3 Incoming resources

Income is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the charity has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation. Grants are recognised on entitlement.

Legacies are recognised on receipt or otherwise if the charity has been notified of an impending distribution, the amount is known, and receipt is expected. If the amount is not known, the legacy is treated as a contingent asset.

Turnover is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable and represents amounts receivable for goods and services provided in the normal course of business, net of discounts, VAT and other sales related taxes.

1.4 Resources expended

Expenditure is accounted for on a receipts and payments basis and is classified under headings that aggregate costs relating to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

1.5 Taxation

The charity is exempt from tax on its charitable activities.

2 Donations and grants

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2025	Total 2024
Donations	750	-	750	1,753
Grant received from the Unwin Charitable Trust	-	-	-	52,500
	<u>750</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>750</u>	<u>54,253</u>

3 Charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2025 £
Post and Stationery	11	47	58
Travel	5	-	5
Insurance	96	-	96
Advertising and promotion	-	554	554
Repairs and maintenance	775	-	775
Staffing	4,356	-	4,356
Telephone	44	-	44
Professional fee	780	-	780
	<u>6,067</u>	<u>601</u>	<u>6,668</u>

4 Trustees Remuneration and Expenses

No trustee has been paid expenses for services provided to the charity in the year. The trustees all give their time and expertise freely without any form of remuneration or other benefit in cash or kind (2024: £nil).

5 Analysis of net assets between Funds

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2025 Total Funds £	2024 Total Funds £
Current assets	62,461	1,067	63,528	69,446
	<u>62,461</u>	<u>1,067</u>	<u>63,528</u>	<u>69,446</u>

6 Movement in funds

	At 01.04.24 £	Net movement in funds £	At 01.04.25 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	67,778	(5,317)	62,461
Restricted funds			
Restricted funds	<u>1,668</u>	<u>(601)</u>	<u>1,067</u>
Total Funds	<u>69,446</u>	<u>(5,918)</u>	<u>63,528</u>

The restricted fund represents a grant received from National Lottery which must be spent on the start up and maintenance of the charity. The majority of the expenditure is on the development and maintenance of the website and published materials.

7 Related Party Disclosures

There have been no related party transactions in the reporting period that require disclosure.